

December 2011.

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We have reached the end of another exciting term at Gormanston. You will by now have received your son/daughter's end of term report. You may have issues that you wish to discuss in the New Year, please direct these to your child's Year Head in the first instance. There have been changes in staff that are responsible for each year group. I have listed them below for ease of reference:

1 st Year	Ms. Genevieve Carron
2 nd Year	Ms. Jacqueline Gray (2A1) Ms. Catriona Doyle (2A2)
3 rd Year	Ms. Gillian Monaghan (3A1) Mr. Laurence Dunne (3A2)
4 th Year	Ms. Elaine Roberts
5 th Year	Mr. Vincent Dunne
6 th Year	Mr. Christy Mc Cutcheon

I have included with this letter a copy of this term's Christmas Newsletter. Please take time to read about the achievements and exploits of our students. The Newsletter has been produced entirely by a group of Transition year students. They have been acknowledged in the Newsletter itself and I would like to formally thank them again for their excellent work.

We have had many positive achievements this term. My thanks to all staff for their continued effort and commitment on behalf of the students and of the College. My thanks also to the Franciscan Community and in particular to Fr. Ulic Troy OFM, our College Rector. He has worked tirelessly since his appointment as Rector last summer.

In December 6th year students attended a half day workshop run by the professional organisation "Super Generation". They helped students to plan their study routine in preparation for their final 6 months of compulsory schooling leading to commencement of the Leaving Certificate exam in June 2012. We hope, in the New Year to run another session with the same company separately aimed at 3rd year and 5th year students.

For junior students we intend to organise an Anti-Bullying Workshop to support and assist students in developing and implementing positive measures to deal with bullying. We are working with the SPHE (Social, Personal, Health, Education Support Service) to address the personal, social, emotional and physical development of our students. The service will aid our school community in implementing DES guidelines, in facilitating a whole school approach to the management of bullying and facilitation of an Anti-Bullying Policy in school.

The service will undertake a student survey with 2nd and 3rd year students only. This will take place on the 30th January, 2012 and will require minimal disruption. It will provide us with feedback and valuable information which we will take forward to a whole day of staff training due to take place on **Friday 16th March, 2012.** This is a change to the school calendar. We will finish school for all students at **3.45pm on Thursday 15th March.** **School re-opens on Tuesday 20th March at 8.25am.**

Fr. Ulic and I along with Mr. Black (Senior Dean of Residence) have already met with the members of each Clann group this term. While it is right to acknowledge the performance and enthusiasm of the vast majority of students there remains a minority who do not accept the school rules as they find them and are threading their own path. Our school is a community and we want to work constructively and positively with every student who wants to be here and who wants to achieve. We have taken a very firm stance against anti-social behaviour. We made it very clear to all our students that our school is on a different course, that we want our students to be comfortable in their school and not to be afraid to speak out against injustice.

Our new school website will be up and running in early January 2012. My thanks to those students who helped me translate the Principal's address to parents into German, Spanish and Korean. The new website will be an important source of communication for all. We also intend to launch an SMS texting service before the end of this academic year. If you haven't returned your primary mobile phone and email details to us already we would ask that you do so as soon as possible.

Advance notice for everybody of the **Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate Trial Examinations which begin on Thursday 2nd February 2012.** The timetable will be available to students in the New Year. Work Experience for Transition year students starts on Monday 30th January while the Parent/Teacher meeting for Transition year students takes place on Thursday 9th February from 4.15pm. The Mid-Term break for all students is from 3.45pm on Friday 10th February, 2012.

All that remains is for me to wish you a Happy and Peaceful Christmas and the very best of luck for 2012!

With every best wish,

Dermot Lavin
Principal